BAR U RANCH

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

Management Plan

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Management Plan

November 2005

Foreword

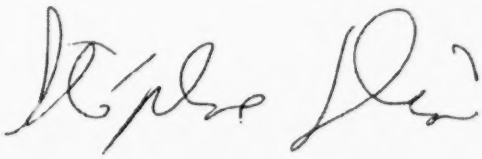
Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas represent the soul of our country. They are a central part of who we are and what we are. They are places of beauty and wonder and heritage. Each tells its own story. Together, they connect Canadians to our roots, to our future and to each other.

We see a future in which each of the national historic sites of Canada, whether federally owned or not, enjoys sound commemorative health, and in which our system of sites evolves as our country evolves. Our national historic sites will be places for all Canadians to experience and learn from. They will help our communities to be vibrant and creative, and contribute to our efforts to revitalize Canada's cities. Together, we will hold these places in trust for this and future generations, while ensuring they contribute to Canada's sustainable economy and environmental health.

Our vision is also for each of Canada's unique terrestrial and marine regions to be represented by at least one national park or national marine conservation area, for all national parks to be in sound ecological health, for all national marine conservation areas to promote the ecologically sustainable use of our marine resources in a way that harmonizes conservation practices with human activities, and for both national parks and national marine conservation areas to be places for all Canadians to experience and enjoy.

These principles form the foundation of the new management plan for the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site of Canada. May I offer my appreciation to the vast range of thoughtful Canadians who helped develop this plan. I am especially grateful to our very dedicated team from Parks Canada and to The Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association who have demonstrated such good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In that same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.



Stéphane Dion
Minister of the Environment

Recommendation Statement

Bar U Ranch
National Historic Site of Canada
Management Plan

Recommended for approval by:

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The Bar U Ranch:
A Place of National Historic Significance

The Bar U Ranch is designated a National Historic Site of Canada because of its important role in the ranching industry of Canada.

In 1881 Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald introduced into the House of Commons a bill permitting individuals and companies to lease grazing land in the Canadian Northwest. The response was immediate and overwhelming. The foothills region of Alberta quickly became the focus of large-scale cattle ranching, including that of the Bar U Ranch. The Bar U and a handful of other large spreads dominated ranching society during the 1890s. Pressure from farmers and from smaller ranchers reduced the large ranges, and the hard winter of 1906 marked the end of the era of the big ranches in Canada. However, the Bar U was one of the few large operations to survive and, under the successive direction of Fred Stimson, George Lane and Pat Burns, prospered into the mid-20th century. They involved the Bar U Ranch in many of the major issues that shaped the ranching industry. The Bar U was one of the best managed of the large ranches and served as a training ground for many cattlemen.

From 1882 to 1902, Fred Stimson and the North West Cattle Company practiced open range ranching at the Bar U Ranch. The era opened with a sparse arrangement of buildings at the ranch's headquarters. Stimson gradually added buildings, corrals and fences as he adapted to changing circumstances.

Under George Lane and his partners, in the period from 1902 to 1927, the Bar U achieved an international reputation for breeding cattle and purebred Percheron horses. The ranch was the linchpin of a business empire that included a number of ranches on the shortgrass prairie as well as farms, meat packing factories and flourmills. Developments at the Bar U reflected the diversity and intensity of this business. New barns, corral and feed preparation facilities accommodated the Percherons, while new residential buildings housed more staff.

During the Burns era from 1927 to 1950, the Bar U was one part of a multi-ranch cattle operation and the Burns Meats empire. An experienced and resilient owner, Patrick Burns piloted his ranches through the Great Depression by cutting back operating expenditures and investing in long-term improvements. Much of the Bar U's Percheron operations were scaled back. Several buildings were modified to store grain, which was grown in great quantities during the Second World War. The Bar U remained one of the largest ranches in the country until 1950 when the executors of the Burns estate sold the property in parcels to other ranchers.

Today, this long and illustrious history of the Bar U Ranch, and the buildings and its other features dating from the late 19th century and 20th century, provide a direct link with Alberta's ranching heritage and the ranching industry of Canada.

1. Introduction

The Bar U Ranch National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) is on Highway 22, thirteen kilometres south of Longview, Alberta, and about one hundred kilometres south of Calgary (Figure 1). The Bar U Ranch was one of a small group of very large corporate ranches in western Canada and from 1882 to 1950 it was one of the foremost ranching operations in Canada. At its largest, the Bar U was nearly seven townships of deeded and leased land, a total of 63,184 hectares (157,960 acres).

Figure 1. Regional setting of Bar U Ranch NHSC, about 100 kilometres south of Calgary.

The Bar U Ranch was designated nationally significant in 1989 because of its important role in the ranching industry of Canada (see box on opposite page). Parks Canada worked with The Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association to make the Bar U a national historic site. Parks Canada acquired the headquarters portion of the ranch in 1991, including 148.43 hectares of land and 38 historic buildings (Figure 2).

The goal of management planning for national historic sites is to ensure their commemorative integrity by applying cultural resource management principles and practice. A management plan also guides how people may use and enjoy the national historic site in an appropriate manner. Under the *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998), a national historic site management plan must be tabled in Parliament and reviewed every five years to ensure it remains relevant and effective as the main management tool for the site.

Figure 2. Bar U Ranch headquarters complex looking west. (Parks Canada)

This management plan sets out the Vision for the Bar U and the strategies to achieving that vision. Along with the strategies are key actions that Parks Canada will undertake in the coming years toward achieving the vision.

In this Vision the Bar U Ranch NHSC will be:

- a living ranch environment, with livestock and ranch hand interpreters, where visitors are engaged, educated and entertained;
- a protected place for all 38 historic buildings and the rich cultural and natural landscape; and
- a place for partners who support the purpose and objectives of the Bar U Ranch as a national historic site.

The plan will guide Parks Canada and its partners as we protect and present the Bar U Ranch NHSC for all Canadians. While the vision and strategies of the management plan should be effective for at least ten years, Parks Canada will initiate a review in five years time for relevance and effectiveness.

This management plan replaces the Bar U management plan approved in 1995. The planning and consultation process for this plan began in 2002.

1.1 The Bar U Ranch and the Family of National Historic Sites

The Bar U Ranch NHSC is one of more than 900 national historic sites nationwide[1]. In this "family" of national historic sites, the Bar U Ranch tells part of the story of Canada's developing economy in the primary industries of farming and ranching, fishing, forestry and mining.

Other national commemorations related to Canada's ranching industry are:

- **Patrick Burns**, prominent rancher and major figure in the meat-processing industry, commemorated by plaque in Calgary;
- **Alfred Ernest Cross**, Alberta entrepreneur in ranching, brewing, oil and gas, and a founder of the Calgary Stampede, commemorated by plaque in Nanton, Alberta; and
- **William Roper Hull**, cattleman, entrepreneur, philanthropist and land developer, commemorated by plaque in Calgary.

1.2 Commemorative Integrity

"Commemorative integrity" is the principal goal for national historic sites under Parks Canada's care. It is used to describe the health or wholeness of a national historic site. A national historic site has commemorative integrity when:

- the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat;
- the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public; and

[1] The federal program of commemoration is made up of several distinct but interlocking parts. In addition to the more than 900 national historic sites of Canada (149 of which are administered by Parks Canada), over 580 persons and 350 events of our history have been commemorated as being nationally significant. The Minister of Environment designates places, persons and events of national significance on the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

- the site's heritage values (including those not related to reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

"Commemorative intent" is the reason for a national historic site's designation. It is also the basis for defining what commemorative integrity means for a site. Commemorative intent comes from the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), as approved by the Minister responsible for Canada's national historic sites. Based on the Board's recommendations, **the Bar U Ranch is of national historic significance because of its important role in the ranching industry of Canada.** The HSMBC noted several major considerations about this commemoration:

- in presenting Canada's ranching industry, the importance and distinctive characteristics of ranching in other Canadian regions should not be overlooked;
- Parks Canada should seek to achieve a meaningful commemoration of the Canadian ranching industry;
- the Bar U Ranch can be interpreted as those resources dating from 1882, when the ranch was established, to 1950, when the ranch holdings were broken up and sold;
- the Bar U's long and close association with the ranching industry did not end with the 1950 dispersal. The headquarters site remained the active centre of a smaller ranch operation up to and for some time after its acquisition by Parks Canada. Most of the original Bar U land holdings continue to be used for raising livestock.

A Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) identifies the designated place, the cultural resources, their historic values and the messages to be considered and accounted for in the decisions and actions that may affect the integrity of the site. The Director General, National Historic Sites, Parks Canada, approved the *Bar U Ranch NHSC Commemorative Integrity Statement* in February 2001.

The original headquarters of the Bar U Ranch, the nearby fields and outbuildings and a portion of Pekisko Creek were selected by the HSMBC as the place of national historic significance (i.e., the designated place). This designated place corresponds with the property administered by Parks Canada. The management plan applies to this entire area.

The cultural resources and the messages of the Bar U are presented in the next chapter. The nationally significant heritage values of the Bar U include:

- the traditional landscape elements associated with foothills cattle country (characteristic fences and corrals, unpaved roads, dispersed farmsteads and ranch buildings, cattle guards and large non-enclosed spaces);
- the unobstructed views of the Rocky Mountains and of large areas of grassland on the flats and the rolling uplands;
- the overall uniformity of building materials, scale and functional design of the ranch headquarters buildings and structures, such as the corrals, feeders and shelters (Figure 3);
- the evolutionary nature of the buildings which reflect continuity of purpose over a long period, but also adaptation to changing operational requirements;
- the combination of built and natural environments that forms the setting of the headquarters, including the cottonwoods along Pekisko Creek, the clustering of buildings in the coulee bottom and the minimal visibility of modern intrusions;
- the sturdy character of the corrals and related structures and their layout within the ranch headquarters; and
- the archaeological remains and objects, and the historic objects from the Bar U Ranch during its period of operation from 1882 to 1950.

This management plan is based largely on the commemorative integrity objectives in the CIS.

In the following chapters we review the beginnings of the Bar U Ranch NHSC (Chapter 2), describe its Vision for the future (Chapter 3), give objectives, strategies and actions to achieving the Vision, i.e., the management plan (Chapter 4), and offer a framework for implementing it (Chapter 5).

Figure 3. Ranch headquarters with cottonwoods along Pekisko Creek and rangeland in background. (C. Cameron)

2. Bar U Ranch: Where We Are (1995-2003)

The establishment and management of the Bar U Ranch NHSC have followed the 1995 management plan, the 1996 *Development Concept*, and the 1997 *Area Development Plan* (Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997). The 2001 *Commemorative Integrity Statement* serves to verify whether directions in these documents meet commemorative integrity objectives.

The Bar U Ranch NHSC was officially opened to the public on July 1, 1995. Much has been done to advance the Bar U's protection, presentation and visitor services, including:

- employment of two full-time and 11 part-time and seasonal staff, the involvement of the Friends and more than 3300 hours of volunteer time in 2003;
- conservation of eight of the historic buildings;
- opening of the Visitor Centre, complete with restaurant and gift shop;
- display of livestock and historic haying practices;
- wagon rides;
- acquisition of historic objects to help furnish the Site; and
- special events, such as ranch horse competitions.

Much remains to be accomplished, in particular:

- the remaining historic buildings require long-term protection;
- heritage presentation must be renewed with a living ranch approach to create enjoyable, meaningful and compelling stories for the visitor;
- precise direction is needed for the acquisition, management and care of historic objects used for furnishing buildings; and
- visitation must increase from the past levels of less than 8000 annually.

2.1 Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resource management involves generally accepted practices for protecting and presenting cultural resources. A cultural resource is a human work or place that gives evidence of human activity or has spiritual or cultural meaning, and has been determined to have heritage value according to municipal, provincial or federal designation, or by community standards of what has cultural or spiritual meaning. Described in the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*, cultural resource management is practised by:

- inventorying resources at a national historic site;
- evaluating whether the resources are cultural resources and, if so, what are their heritage values;
- considering the heritage value in decisions and actions that may affect the protection and presentation of cultural resources; and
- monitoring cultural resources and our actions to ensure their conservation and protection.

With the exception of the Site's historic objects, the inventory and evaluation of cultural resources at the Bar U is thorough. It includes both Level 1 and Level 2 cultural resources. A Level 1 cultural resource is any resource directly related to the reason(s) for designation as a national historic site. A Level 2 cultural resource is any resource not related to the reasons for national significance, but nonetheless has heritage value. A resource may be included in this category by virtue of its historical, aesthetic or environmental qualities. Parks Canada values most highly those cultural resources of national historic significance, i.e., Level 1. But Level 2 cultural resources must also be respected and managed for their heritage values.

Level 1 cultural resources include the Bar U Ranch headquarters complex, the 30 buildings dating to the 1882 - 1950 period that make up the complex, and the landscape features, the archaeological remains and objects also dating to 1882-1950. In addition, the buildings in the headquarters complex are "Classified" under the *Federal Heritage Buildings Policy*. A classified federal heritage building means a federal building to which the Minister of Environment has assigned the policy's highest heritage designation.

Level 2 cultural resources include Aboriginal sites and objects possibly dating from 200 years ago or longer, and post-1950 ranch buildings, features and objects (principally the main ranch house, its garage, the hay shed and the concrete piggery).

The Parks Canada *State of the Parks 1997 Report* reported the Bar U Ranch NHSC (mostly the buildings and historic object collections) as being under a high degree of threat. By 2003 eight buildings had been conserved for the long-term. This includes the ranch office / post office, the harness repair shop, the three storage sheds, the blacksmith shop, the saddle horse barn and the coal shed. In addition, the foundations for the stud horse barn and the chop house were stabilized and a new roof was installed on the work horse barn. With the exception of a few outbuildings, the remaining headquarters' buildings have been protected for now with window coverings, roof covering and structural shoring where required. Some of the buildings from the 1950s and 1960s have been rehabilitated for Site operation purposes.

There have been two collections of historic objects on the Site, one owned by the Friends and the other by Parks Canada. They are used to furnish some of the buildings. Each collection has been inventoried and treated separately. The inventory and evaluation of historic objects is incomplete.

The archaeological resources of the Bar U have been and continue to be monitored for threats and impairments.

2.2 *Heritage Presentation Program*

Heritage presentation is how Parks Canada provides opportunities for enjoyment of and active learning about its parks and sites. Such opportunities may be on-site for visitors or off-site – known as outreach – for interested Canadians. In Canada's national historic sites, heritage presentation forms a large part of the visitor experience.

The principal messages in the Bar U's heritage presentation are: 1) the ranching industry in Canada is of national historic importance and 2) the Bar U Ranch played an important role in the ranching industry in Canada. These messages are further defined by their contextual messages, as follows:

- the ranching industry has played a significant role in Canada's economy.
  - Its importance relates to local, national and international markets. These markets, availability of capital, economic risks and price cycles in turn affected the ranching industry.
  - Large-scale commercial stock raising is found across Canada. The history of ranching has been distinct in each region.
- the Bar U was one of several large corporate enterprises organized in the late 19th century and established in the Alberta foothills, one of the historically important ranching regions of Canada.
  - The land lease system was key to the small number of large corporate ranches in the foothills.
- Frederick Smith Stimson, George Lane and Patrick Burns were leading personalities in the Bar U's management. Each also played a role in the broader history of the ranching industry, as spokesmen and entrepreneurs.
- Founded in 1882, the Bar U was a significant ranching enterprise during the heyday of ranching in Canada. After being broken up and sold in 1950, the Bar U remained active as a smaller ranch operation.
  - The Bar U was not a typical ranch.
  - The Bar U has some interesting and unique stories to its history.

• The ranching industry includes a significant human history involving individuals and groups of various political, social and cultural backgrounds.	❑ The job skills, living conditions and social activities of the owners and investors, the managers and the labour force were contrasts in lifestyle. ❑ Aboriginal people were participants in the ranching industry (notably as an important seasonal workforce). ❑ Women had an important role in ranch life and operations.
• The ranching industry uses distinctive practices and technologies.	❑ Techniques and methods evolved as ranching intensified.
• Grazing leases and land-use conflicts have helped define the history of ranching.	❑ The federal political context of the late 19th century gave rise to the grazing lease system. ❑ Conflicts over land existed between ranchers, other settlers and Aboriginal people.
• Range ecology is an important aspect of ranching history.	❑ The area of the foothills is a highly resilient natural environment that has adapted to ranching. ❑ The success and longevity of the Bar U is attributable, in part, to the range ecosystem that supported it. ❑ There are present challenges in range management.

We also communicate that:

- the Bar U is a protected place of significant cultural and natural resources; and
- the Bar U Ranch NHSC is part of a family of national historic sites.

Since the establishment of the Bar U Ranch NHSC, Parks Canada's objective has been to create a vibrant, living ranch approach to present the story of the Site. The Visitor Centre serves to orient visitors to the Site and its history. After that, presentation relies on the Site's premier assets – the ranch buildings in their authentic natural setting complemented by interactive heritage presentation. Activities, such as wagon rides, harnessing, roping demonstrations and rodeo events have been used to create a sense of time and place. Heritage presentation programs are continually being developed or revised to ensure commemorative integrity objectives and visitor expectations are met. Improvements were already underway with the commencement of this management plan review.

2.3 *Visitors, Visitor Services and Facilities*

In western Canada the Bar U Ranch NHSC offers a distinctive education and entertainment experience in Canadian heritage. While Albertans recognize and benefit from their ranching heritage (for example, the Calgary Stampede, vacation ranches, package tours and community museums), there are only a few places today established to specifically commemorate the history of the ranching industry. Most notable are the Bar U Ranch NHSC and the Cochrane Ranche provincial historic site. The Bar U does so with an animated program in a historically authentic, captivating setting of the foothills. The Bar U is an *Icon Attraction* on "The Cowboy Trail" (Highway 22).

Annual visitor attendance, ranging from 9956 in 1998/99 to 7510 in 2002/03, has been a third of that projected when the Site was first established. It is believed the main reason for not meeting the projection is that the Bar U has not attracted the large urban Calgary market as anticipated.

Most of what we know about Bar U visitors (excluding tour groups and school groups) comes from a survey done in 2000. For example,

- 34% of surveyed visitors come from the Calgary, High River and rural areas south of Calgary and around the Site, and 23% come from elsewhere in Alberta;
- 85% were visiting for the first time (about 70% of local/regional visitors were first time);
- 81% were in groups of two to five people;
- two to three hours was the typical amount of time spent on Site;
- the age profile suggests that the Bar U was most popular with adults aged 35-64 although family groups were common;
- the main motive for visiting the Bar U was educational – to learn about history, and social – time with friends in a relaxed setting; and
- visitors were largely satisfied with the services and facilities, the heritage presentation program and saw value for the entrance fee they paid.

For purposes of marketing we categorize our visitors as follows:

- **Local community:** This includes the public living in close vicinity of the Bar U. The Bar U has been and will continue to be an attraction for area residents, and their visiting family and friends. It is a place where the local ranching community can meet one another and connect with their ranching heritage.

- **Excursionists:** We want to see more of this group. It consists of family and friend groups who are making day trips or excursions, largely from Calgary and area. They are in search of relaxing countryside, and small town shops and restaurants. The trip is typically a half-day where "the journey is the destination", meaning that enjoyment is derived more from the drive and stops rather than any particular destination. For this

audience the Bar U has the setting, programs and services (e.g., restaurant, gift shop) that afford social activity opportunities.

- **Tourists:** Tourists to the Bar U include both foreign and domestic travellers. They come a great distance and will be away from home for greater than 24 hours. Many tourists visit the Bar U as a planned or unplanned stop on their trips along Highway 22 and 2 to places such as Kananaskis Country, Waterton Lakes National Park of Canada, the Crowsnest Pass, Head Smashed In World Heritage Site and Writing on Stone Provincial Park. Many of these tourists are partaking in heritage tourism. For them, seeking quality learning opportunities in an authentic setting is fundamental.

- **Tour Groups (Bus Tours):** The group may be members of a particular club or organization, or it may simply form through the common interest of travelling to a destination at a reduced transportation cost. The Bar U is a potential destination for the growing tour group market. Evidence of this potential has already be seen in 2003 with a marked increase in the number of tour groups visiting the Bar U despite the problems the travel industry has experienced in this millennium. For them a well-organized, led tour within a set schedule is important.

- **School Groups:** Schools are a most important client. The Bar U Ranch NHSC has strong links with Alberta's education curriculum, particularly Grades 3, 4 and 5 social studies. Parks Canada will continue to provide programs to meet school needs and commemorative integrity objectives. School groups visit the Site in mid-June and from mid-September to mid-October.

Adequate visitor facilities and services exist for the Bar U. The capacity of facilities and services, including the parking lot, Visitor Centre, restaurant, gift shop and washrooms can meet current demand and future increases. The Site can accommodate at least 30,000 visitors a year, with as many as 500 visitors on a given day. Additional visitor services will be soon added on-site at the cook house (a rest area).

Much has been done to develop local interest in the Bar U but, to increase visitation, we need to look further abroad and toward the Calgary market. Our consultation with the tourism industry indicated that providing quality, predicable and consistent programming was a key issue for the Bar U. The Site also needed to develop partnerships in its presentation and promotion. Rather than treating other heritage attractions south of Calgary as competition for people's leisure time and dollars, they and the Bar U can form excursion packages on a route that loops south of Calgary on Highways 2 and 22.

2.4 *Environmental Stewardship*

Although the Canada National Parks mandate to maintain or restore ecological integrity does not apply to national historic sites, Parks Canada is a steward for the environment and the Bar U Ranch NHSC is valued for its natural resources. Significant ecosystem components underlie the Bar U including tame pastures and formerly cultivated fields, native grassland remnants, and the creek valley flats and riparian zones. Other significant natural features include habitat for native fish and wildlife populations.

The ranch's headquarters is in the sheltered bottom of the Pekisko Creek valley, a tributary of the Highwood River. The valley is a wide floodplain with a series of terraces. Cottonwood stands are found along the edge of the creek. Pekisko Creek is recognized as an important fish spawning and rearing tributary to the Highwood and Bow Rivers. The riparian corridor along Pekisko Creek within the Bar U has been set aside to protect the cottonwoods and the aquatic habitat. It serves as a reference site for "Cows and Fish", the Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Program. Since 1997, grazing has been eliminated in the riparian corridor and its ecological function has begun to improve.

Beyond the river valley the rolling uplands have cultivated grasses, grains and hay crops, and an area of largely altered native fescue grassland. Only a few patches of the area's original grasslands remain, and many areas contain a mix of introduced forage and weedy grasses. Studies in the mid-1990s rated much of the range in poor to fair condition, although still very productive. Since then, some areas of range have improved after a few years of rest and several years of exceptional growing conditions.

The area contributes to the habitat requirements of a variety of fish and wildlife species including some species of potential concern. Bull Trout, Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Swainson's Hawk, Bullock's Oriole, Grizzly Bear and Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel are all species of federal or provincial concern that have been observed within the area's boundaries. With the possible exception of Bull Trout and the Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel, these species are occasional migrants or visitors. Aquatic and riparian habitats, and native grassland remnants, are the most significant natural features with respect to wildlife habitat.

2.5 *Partnerships*

Parks Canada has worked with The Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association to make the Bar U Ranch a national historic site. "The Friends" is a volunteer organization dedicated to working in partnership with Parks Canada to increase public awareness of western Canada's ranching heritage. The Friends and volunteers contribute to regular and special events programming. Friends' members have given freely their time, knowledge and advice through various activities, including the Artifacts Collection, Cattle, Policy and Volunteer Committees. The Bar U Ranch NHSC also partners with other organizations in areas of resource management and tourism.

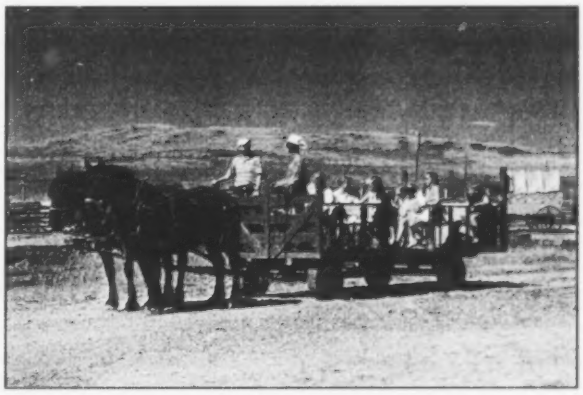
2.6 *Administration and Operations*

The Bar U Ranch NHSC is a seasonal operation, open seven days a week from late May to mid-October. Parks Canada administers the Bar U under authority of the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*. The Waterton Field Unit is responsible for the Site. Parks Canada staff are responsible for the management, protection and presentation programs at the Bar U. The Site manager resides on the Site.

3. The Vision for the Bar U Ranch

This vision describes the desired future for the Bar U Ranch NHSC. It is an inspirational view to focus and guide the planning, management and operation while fostering cooperation among those who will enjoy, care for and use the Site. Here is the vision.

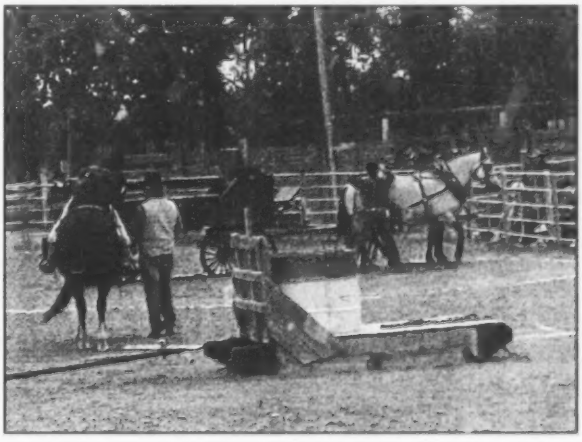
As a major tourist destination in southern Alberta, the Bar U Ranch NHSC will be renowned for its unique, authentic presentation of ranch culture and as a key location along the Cowboy Trail (Highway 22).



Visitors will discover the important role of the Bar U Ranch in the Canadian ranching industry. Their sense of time and place will be enhanced by immersion in a living ranch environment. They will experience the sounds, smells and sights of an active ranch, including:

- the presence of livestock;
- ranch hands at work with daily chores;
- demonstrations of traditional skills using period objects and machinery;
- music, poetry and storytelling;
- preserved heritage buildings and corrals of the original ranch headquarters; and
- vistas of open range and stunning mountain views.

The rural character and heritage values of the ranch headquarters, its buildings, and the surrounding corrals and range will be protected. A healthy, predominantly native riparian cottonwood forest along Pekisko Creek and open grass-covered range will enhance the natural character and historic feel of the Bar U.



The Bar U Ranch NHSC will be operated by Parks Canada to focus on commemorative intent and provide quality visitor services and interpretive programming. The Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association, other organizations and volunteers will play an important role in supporting the Site's presentation and protection objectives.

The Bar U's constituency will expand to include regional-urban centres through networks with the family of historic sites, tourism industry, provincial agencies, youth and other interested Canadians. These efforts will inform, influence and involve the public in achieving the vision of the Bar U.

4. The Management Plan

The goals, objectives, strategies and actions herein will direct how Parks Canada and its partners will achieve the Vision for the Bar U Ranch NHSC.

The goals are from the *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*. The objectives describe what will be evident when Parks Canada meets its goals at the Bar U and the Site Vision is achieved. The strategies lay out the approach to managing and decision-making. The key actions flow from the strategies and provide a work plan for the Bar U for the coming years. The key actions are starting points for plan implementation, but do not necessarily make up all the possible work that should be done. But, they will provide a means to measure progress in achieving the Vision and ensuring commemorative integrity for the next management plan review.

4.1 Heritage Presentation

Through heritage presentation, visitors see, relate to, learn from, experience and should be inspired by an historic site and its heritage. This section details Parks Canada's intent to improve visitor learning and enjoyment with a living ranch program. The organization of the Site by interpretive nodes, having visitors guide themselves about the Site, interpretive signage on the grounds and interaction with ranch hands at work, are new directions for the Site that will help enable Parks Canada to deliver the living ranch program.

Heritage Presentation Goal

- The Canadian public understands the national historic significance of the Bar U Ranch NHSC and supports its ongoing protection and presentation.

Heritage Presentation Objectives

- The Site messages will be the foundation for the stories told.
- The stories and their messages will be effectively communicated to the public through a living ranch program and self-guided media.
- Heritage presentation will engage all visitors to the Bar U.

Visitors come to the Bar U as an educational experience, as a social experience, or both. Thus heritage presentation programs and the visitor facilities and services that support them must consider both interests. Heritage presentation must also enable flexibility for those visitors who wish to discover the Bar U at their own pace and for their own particular interests. Yet we must also be able to provide structured visits for others, such as tour and school groups.

4.1.1 The Living Ranch

At the Bar U, a living ranch program models a working ranch. It will involve demonstrating select ranch and ranching activities on a fixed daily (regular programming) and seasonal (special events programming) schedule. These demonstrations, some in furnished buildings, and other visitor opportunities, such as range trail rides, would form the core of a typical visit.

A successful living ranch program will be:

- **sights, sounds and smells** – showing livestock and ranch hands at work, and blending regular operations, such as building or grounds maintenance, with heritage presentation;
- **daily interpreted ranch activities** – where visitors interact with and learn from ranch hands doing demonstrations that are repeated daily and become fixtures for a typical Site visit;
- **special learning opportunities** - engaging visitors through seasonal ranching activities and by offering group package activities;
- **connecting with the land** - offering visitors the opportunity to explore the rangeland on foot, horseback or by wagon;
- **strong relationships and support** - delivering an exciting and informative program through participation of the Friends, volunteers, other partners and sponsors. This support is critical to a successful program;
- **conservation and maintenance of the historic site** – preserving the authenticity and integrity of the Bar U Ranch NHSC, which make the living ranch program even more special.

The living ranch will be a principal form for heritage presentation on-site, mixed with other forms of personal and non-personal delivery[2].

The Bar U: A Cowboy Poem by Lewis Pederson (2003)

It's a great old historic ranch
Snuggled up to Pekisko Creek.
It's a magical valley where
Cowboys once gathered,
And pioneers now come to speak.

The Bar U was important then, not just to Alberta –
Shipped cattle and Percherons to the world.
It's those ranching memories we bring to life,
A sense of time and place unfurled.

Parks Canada and the Bar U Friends present
Livestock, barns, corrals and native range.
(We don't do things by halves.)
So, it's "WELCOME" one and all
To our proud ranching tradition.
"COME SEE OUR HORSES AND CALVES!"

[2] Forms of personal delivery include talks and demonstrations, curriculum-based studies for school groups, tours for groups, special events and workshops. Forms of non-personal delivery include brochures and other print material for broad distribution, signs and displays, audio-visual and electronic media.

Key Action:

- Heritage programming and products will be developed toward delivering and achieving a living ranch program at the Bar U.

The following illustrates how most visitors will see the Site upon arriving at its entrance. It is presented under the headings of Visitor Centre, Viewpoints, Ranch Headquarters, and Fields (Figure 4).

Periodic surveys of visitors will be conducted to measure the effectiveness of heritage presentation, it media and messages. These surveys will address what programs and media visitors are using, what they are remembering about the Site's importance and meaning, and what ongoing improvements are required.

4.1.2 Visitor Centre: western hospitality

The Visitor Centre will continue to welcome visitors and prepare them for their visit. Visitors will be introduced to why the Bar U is a national historic site. Exhibits, maps and the audio-visual program introduce them to:

- an overview of the Bar U's history, including its geographical extent, its historical phases and its leading personalities;
- the importance of the Foothills region to ranching;
- the importance of ranching to the Canadian economy; and
- the family of national historic sites.

While the heritage presentation strategy for the Bar U will focus our efforts on the living ranch at the headquarters complex and the fields, some improvements will be made to the Visitor Centre to better the sense of arrival, welcome and orientation. Many of these improvements will be effective, yet economical. Some displays, such as the one about Stimson, Lane and Burns, need only be moved and better labelled to be more noticeable. Cosmetic changes to the front and interior of the Visitor Centre can give a ranch-like "rancher pride in home yard" effect. The orientation video is good and its messages are clear. We will review the scheduling of the video show with the wagon ride and other on-site programs to ensure that visitors have the opportunity to see the video as an important part of their introduction to the Bar U.

Key Actions:

- A more positive sense of arrival and welcome at the Site's front gate and at the Visitor Centre will be created through signage and other visual media.
- Certain displays within the Visitor Centre will be relocated and re-labeled.
- A display and cross-promotion material on the family of national historic sites will be included in the Visitor Centre.

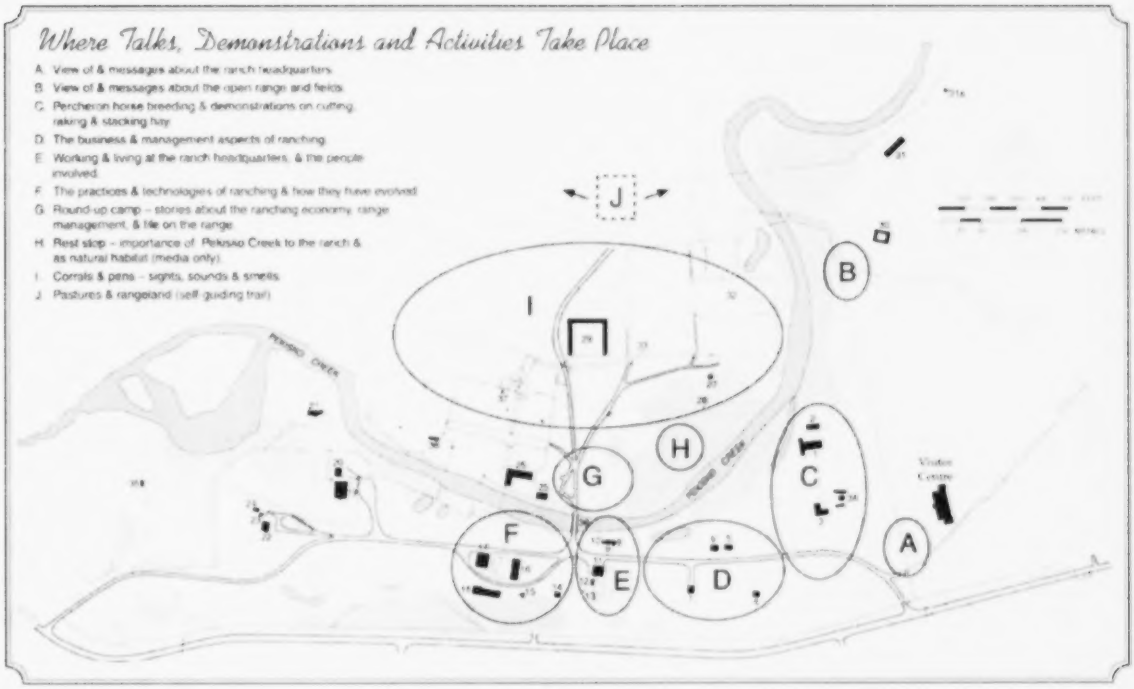
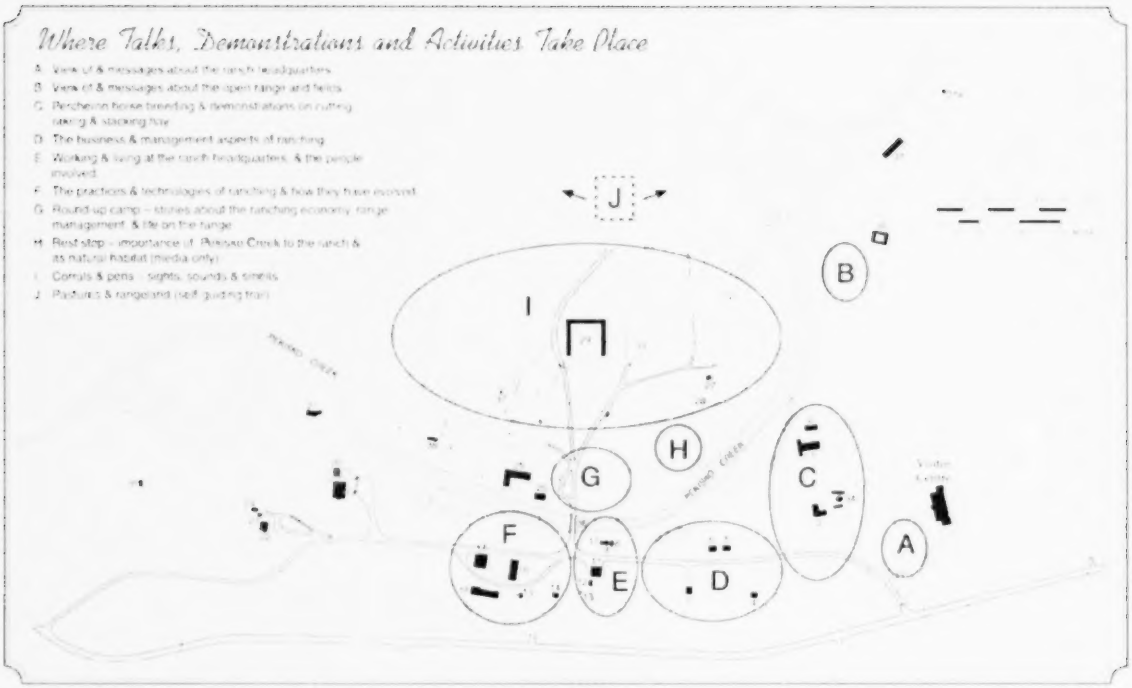

Where Talks, Demonstrations and Activities Take Place
A. View of & messages about the ranch headquarters.
B. View of & messages about the open range and fields.
C. Percheron horse breeding & demonstrations on cutting, raking & stacking hay.
D. The business & management aspects of ranching.
E. Working & living at the ranch headquarters, & the people involved.
F. The practices & technologies of ranching & how they have evolved.
G. Round-up camp – stories about the ranching economy, range management, & life on the range.
H. Rest stop – importance of Pekisko Creek to the ranch & as natural habitat (media only).
I. Corrals & pens – sights, sounds & smells.
J. Pastures & rangeland (self-guiding trail).
PEKISKO CREEK
HOUSE CREEK
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J

Figure 4. .Interpretive Nodes at the Bar U Ranch NHSC. (R. Storeshaw, Parks Canada).
Buildings, identified by number, are:

1. stud horse barn
2. hay shed
3. chop house
4. log house
5. ranch / post office
6. harness shop
7. tractor shed
8-10. storage buildings
11. cook house
12. coal shed
13. root cellar
14. blacksmith shop
15. shed (removed)
16. saddle horse barn
17. work horse barn
18. implement shed
19. ranch house
20. ranch house garage
21. poultry building
22-24. Pierson house, wood shed & garage
25. dairy barn
26. piggery
27. slaughter house
28. privy
29. Percheron box stalls
30. self-feeder / former bunkhouse
31. hog barn
32. corrals & pens
33. granary
34. storage (removed)
35. garage
36. bridge


Where Talks, Demonstrations and Activities Take Place
A. View of & messages about the ranch headquarters
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D. The business & management aspects of ranching
E. Working & living at the ranch headquarters & the people involved
F. The practices & technologies of ranching & how they have evolved
G. Round-up camp – stories about the ranching economy, range management, & life on the range
H. Rest stop – importance of Pekisko Creek to the ranch & as natural habitat (media only)
I. Corrals & pens – sights, sounds & smells
J. Pastures & rangeland (self-guiding trail)
J
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Figure 4. Interpretive Nodes at the Bar U Ranch NHSC. (R. Storeshaw, Parks Canada).
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27. slaughter house
28. privy
29. Percheron box stalls
30. self-feeder / former bunkhouse
31. hog barn
32. corrals & pens
33. granary
34. storage (removed)
35. garage
36. bridge

4.1.3 Viewpoints: discovery

From the Visitor Centre visitors will be directed to their choice of two viewpoints. The viewpoint to the north of the Visitor Centre introduces visitors to the open range, home fields and farming operations of the Bar U. The viewpoint just west of the Visitor Centre will introduce the ranch headquarters complex. It would be an appropriate place to tell the story of Fred Stimson and his decision to establish the Bar U by Pekisko Creek. These viewpoints will be wheelchair accessible from the Visitor Centre, enabling special needs access to the Site. They will be designed so not to obstruct the views from the ranch headquarters.

Key Actions:

- A viewpoint to the west of the Visitor Centre will be established.

4.1.4 Ranch Headquarters: immersion

Heritage presentation at the ranch headquarters will be structured around self-contained interpretive nodes. There will be four such nodes in the ranch headquarters: Percheron Breeding, Business of the Ranch, Belly of the Ranch and Technological Change. Each node will be used to tell particular Site messages. Each node will have a focal point where visitors are powerfully engaged through demonstrations, talks or other activities done by ranch hand interpreters and volunteers. Some buildings may not have staff or volunteers in them at all times and this matter needs to be considered in how they are presented, furnished and kept secure.

The talks, demonstrations and other presentation activities will follow a schedule. Thus visitors can pick and choose where, when and what they see with a schedule to plan their time and activities.

Percheron Breeding

This node includes the chop house, stud horse barn, hay shed and the area used to demonstrate the cutting, raking and stacking of hay. The story of the Percheron box stalls (foaling barn) will also be told here. The stud horse barn will have a display on the importance of the Percheron horse breeding program during the Lane era. On occasion Percherons will be kept here in a corral to be located next to the barn (as there was historically). The barn may also serve as the venue to tell about the protection of the Bar U's historic buildings. The growing, harvesting, storing and preparing of feed for the Percherons and other livestock will be told and demonstrated here using period equipment.

Business of the Ranch

This node includes the ranch office / post office, the harness shop and the tractor shed. This node will feature stories on the business and management aspects of ranching using the furnished ranch office as a focal point.

Belly of the Ranch

This node includes buildings that supported the operation of the ranch, particularly the feeding of the workers of the ranch. Included are the cook house (the focal point), root cellar, coal shed and three store houses across the road from the cook house (Figure 5). The story of the dairy barn and the slaughterhouse would also be told here. This is an appropriate place to tell the stories of the people involved in the ranching industry.

We see the cook house not only as a focal point for this node and its story, but also a central part of the Site's living ranch program for years to come. The furnishing and function of the cook house needs to consider that this building will serve as a gathering and rest stop for visitors. The cook house will provide basic shelter, comfort and water for visitors.

Figure 5. The cook house will be a focal point for visitors. (Parks Canada)

Technological Change

This node looks at some of the practices and technologies of ranching and how they have evolved (for example, moving from horse-drawn to motorized technology). Included in this node are the blacksmith shop (the focal point), saddle horse barn, work horse barn and equipment shed (Figure 6). Current heritage presentation works well here, particularly the exhibit at the back of the saddle horse barn. The story on technological change needs to be developed more. Currently the implement shed needs to meet operational needs, but in the long-term could be integral to the heritage presentation at this node.

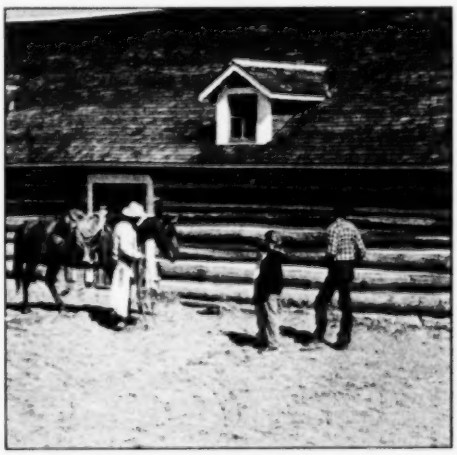

Figure 6. Outside the saddle horse barn. (Parks Canada)

Key Actions:

- A signage program will be developed and implemented for the ranch headquarters to support self-guided visits. Signage will be designed and located so not to impair commemorative integrity.
- A display plan will be developed, approved and implemented for the stud horse barn.
- A corral will be located next to the stud horse for occasional keeping of Percheron horses.
- A display plan will be developed and possibly implemented for the chop house.
- Furnishing plans will be developed, approved and implemented for the ranch office / post office, harness shop, cook house, the three storage buildings and the blacksmith's shop.

4.1.5 The Fields: vastness

"The Fields" is essentially the corrals, pens, pasture and range to the north side of Pekisko Creek. Here, visitors will see the raison d'etre of the ranch, raising livestock. The visitor will have the opportunity to see shorthorn cattle, heavy horses - including Percherons, and sheep. As well, on occasion the visitor will be introduced to techniques of range management, such as fencing and haying with traditional equipment. The round-up camp will serve as the visitors' gateway to this area.

Round-Up Camp

A re-creation of a field camp at round-up time, this is a captivating focal point for visitors where staff talk about the ranching economy, range management and life on the range (Figure 7). Occasionally, visitors will have the opportunity to hear *old-timers* talk about ranching and the Bar U itself as they sit about the campfire, drinking coffee and sharing stories. We cannot lose the traditional knowledge and heritage in the stories told by *old-timers* at the round-up camp. Recording these stories for posterity is an immediate heritage protection and presentation priority for the Bar U.

Figure 7. Round-up camp and storytelling by *old-timers*. (Parks Canada)

From the round-up camp visitors are directed to the Pekisko Creek rest stop, the pens and corrals, and the pastures and rangeland beyond. Information on these three areas will be provided here.

Pekisko Creek Rest Stop
This will be an area among the cottonwoods, east of the round-up camp, that will offer visitors a peaceful and interesting place to pass some time. It will be a very low-key rest area, limited to a bench or two. Non-personal interpretation here can focus on the importance of the creek to the Bar U and as natural habitat.

Corrals and Pens
Included in this node are the wintering pens to the east of the Percheron box stall, the corrals, squeezes and chutes to its west, and the polo field.

The pens and corrals (and the foaling barn) will be interpreted by non-personal means that show and explain the system of fencing and gates. This media will be developed once the corrals have been re-established. This area will be needed for regular work with livestock that will contribute to the sights, sounds and smells of a living ranch. Part of the corrals to the west side of the Percheron box stalls will be accessed by the public for equestrian and livestock events. The polo field will be used for special events.

Pastures and Rangeland
Visitors will be able to tour the pasture and range lands, and view the larger designated place, by using a self-guiding trail. This trail will be accessible to walkers only when livestock are not in the fields where the trail will be. A wagon ride could be offered should there be a demonstrated continuous demand for this type of service.

Key Actions:

- *Old-timers'* stories told at round-up camp and during other Site functions will be recorded, with permission. It is preferable to professionally record the telling of these stories and, in time, build this audio-visual record into presentations.
- The Pekisko Creek rest stop will be established.
- The wooden squeeze will receive particular attention for presentation.
- A display plan will be developed, approved and implemented for the pens and corrals.
- A range trail will be designed and developed based on guidelines in the 1997 *Area Development Plan*.

4.1.6 Outreach

Some people may be interested in the Bar U and its stories, but may never visit the Site. They include students and teachers who may use the information to complement their curriculum. Outreach will be done through services provided directly by Parks Canada (e.g., the Parks Canada web site, National Park / Historic Site Information Centres and publications) and visits to schools as requested.

4.2 Heritage Protection

This section details Parks Canada's commitment to respect, maintain and protect the designated place of the Bar U Ranch NHSC and its cultural resources. In particular, a strategy is presented for the long term care of all 38 historic buildings. Natural resource management is presented under Environmental Stewardship.

Heritage Protection Goals

- The designated place and the Level 1 cultural resources are unimpaired or not under threat.
- Heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site, i.e., Level 2) are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

Heritage Protection Objectives

- ***Rangeland***: The extent of the original home range of the Bar U is communicated to the public; the character-defining elements of the rural landscape around the Bar U will be retained; and the historic view planes from the Site will remain unobstructed.
- ***Ranch headquarters complex***: The historic and natural setting of the headquarters complex in the Pekisko Creek valley, and the layout and functional organization of its buildings and other features will be maintained to safeguard these relationships.
- ***Historic buildings***: Historic buildings and the remnants of buildings and other features will be managed and monitored to respect their heritage values and ensure their long-term protection and appropriate use.
- ***Corrals and fences*** will be managed and monitored to respect their heritage values and ensure their long-term protection and appropriate use.
- ***Historic objects and archaeological objects*** associated with the Bar U will be inventoried, evaluated, managed and monitored to respect their heritage values and ensure their long-term protection and appropriate use.

4.2.1 The Rangeland

At its largest the Bar U Ranch covered almost seven townships of deeded and leased land: 63,184 hectares (157,960 acres). The rangeland includes rolling uplands, level "flats" and creek bottoms where dominant vegetation was the native fescue grass so important to stock growers. The home range of the Bar U extended from the Highwood River south to the headwaters of Stimson Creek, and from the hills along the line between Range 4 and Range 3, east to the 5th Meridian. Today, the Bar U Ranch NHSC is 0.25 % of its former size: 148.43 hectares (367 acres).

The majority of former Bar U leases are still in use by neighbouring ranchers and the countryside surrounding the Bar U Ranch NHSC still displays the

typical patterns of rural settlement and ranching of the 20th century. But, like many regions of Alberta, the area is increasingly affected by fragmentation of agricultural lands and impacts from residential development. The Municipal District of Foothills No. 31, in which the Bar U is located, has recognized these development pressures in the Vision Statement of its Municipal Development Plan:

> ... the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31 is a unique rural landscape where agriculture is the predominant land use and should remain so in the future. However, the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31 is subject to development pressures as a result of being located in an area of substantial urban activity and therefore must take proactive steps to manage development.

Parks Canada, in co-operation with the Friends and other interested parties, will encourage the safeguarding of the character-defining elements of the rural landscape around the Bar U and the unobstructed historic view planes from the Site. It will do so by supporting the Municipal District of Foothill's goals and objectives to protect sites of archaeological and historical significance within the Municipality (Section 3.2.5 of the Municipal Development Plan) as they relate to the Bar U.

Key Actions:

- Parks Canada will seek to provide input to any future municipal planning, such as an Area Concept Plan that relates to the Bar U.

4.2.2 Ranch Headquarters Complex

The headquarters of the Bar U was chosen in 1882 because of its relationship to the North West Cattle Company's lease, and because of the advantages offered by a sheltered coulee bottom: year-round water, a large stand of trees for shade and fuel, and some protection from the prevailing winds. Over time, through the addition of buildings, corrals, bridges, fences and roadways, the headquarters complex evolved to reflect the changing needs of the ranch business. Buildings changed functions, some were altered to suit a change in use, and some were moved or lost to fire. However, the overall composition of the ranch headquarters, strung out along a central road, remains intact and exhibits a high degree of integrity. The complex as a whole is a Level 1 cultural resource.

The strategy for protecting the ranch headquarters complex is to document and preserve its buildings, landscape and archaeological remains in a way that respects the evolutionary character of the complex. Furthermore, contemporary services and facilities should not mar the authenticity of the headquarters complex by adding to, altering or destroying its heritage values. The protection of the ranch headquarters from flood and fire will be addressed in the Bar U's fire management plan and a disaster preparedness plan.

Key Actions:

- We will work toward having a map and database (GIS) for the headquarters that records changes to the buildings, landscape and archaeological remains over time. This information will be vital for managing the complex as a whole and as individual cultural resources, including the conduct of environmental assessments.
- Overhead contemporary utilities will be replaced with buried and hidden service lines. Replicas of the historical electrical and telephone lines will be installed.
- A disaster preparedness plan will be developed for the headquarters complex, its buildings, and their contents that will address threats and impacts from fire and flood.

4.2.3 Historic Buildings

Parks Canada will continue its program to protect all 38 historic buildings on the Site. These buildings have been identified as Level 1 or Level 2 cultural resources. All are designated "Classified" under the *Federal Heritage Buildings Policy*. The cost of such a program makes it necessary to be selective as to the level and schedule of protection to be done for each building. For example, some buildings will be focal points for heritage presentation. These buildings will eventually be repaired on the inside and outside, and adapted and furnished for visitor programs. Other buildings, however, will be stabilized only as part of the ranch headquarters' setting, with no further restorative work and no public access to their interior.

The buildings will be managed in keeping with *the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy* and the *Federal Heritage Buildings Policy*. The Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office must evaluate proposed modifications to the historic buildings. The protection strategy for the buildings will be threefold:

- regular maintenance and monitoring of buildings already conserved;
- conservation of buildings to be used in heritage presentation or for Site operations; and
- stabilization only of buildings that will be periodically monitored.

Regular Maintenance and Monitoring

Eight of the Bar U buildings have already been conserved to the point that materials, form and integrity of the buildings have been retained and they can be kept serviceable through routine maintenance and minimal repair.

The following conserved buildings will be monitored and receive maintenance on a regular basis to ensure they remain in good condition (i.e., no more than minimal requirements will be required to repair or protect them):

- ranch office / post office;
- harness shop;
- three storage buildings across from the cook house;
- blacksmith shop;
- saddle horse barn; and
- coal shed.

The ranch house and garage, and the former piggery have been rehabilitated and are now the Site manager's residence and maintenance facility respectively.

Conservation

The following buildings will be conserved in the future and used for heritage presentation or Site operations. They require conservation because they are in poor or fair condition and need major repairs to protect them:

- cook house
- stud horse barn
- Percheron box stalls
- tractor shed
- hay shed
- root cellar (entry only)
- chop house
- slaughter house
- dairy barn
- log house
- Pierson house, garage and wood shed
- implement shed
- work horse barn

Rehabilitation is a form of conservation that makes possible the continuing or compatible contemporary use of a building through repair, alterations and/or additions, while protecting the heritage values of the building. Once conserved these buildings will be monitored and maintained on a regular basis.

Stabilization

The following buildings have been or will be stabilized with the least possible intervention necessary to protect their heritage values and their structural integrity:

- poultry building
- smokehouse
- outhouse
- privy
- self-feeder / bunkhouse
- hog barn
- livestock shed
- garage
- veterinary's shed
- portable self-feeder
- animal shelter
- wind generator building

These buildings form part of the heritage presentation of the ranch headquarters complex, but their interiors will not be accessible to the public. At most these buildings will be periodically monitored for their condition. Any need for further intervention beyond basic stabilization will be examined for the next management plan review.

Key Actions:

- The cook house will be conserved to present the story of the 'belly of the ranch", mid-1940s.
- The stud horse barn will be partially rehabilitated (mainly new flooring) to display the story of George Lane and the Percheron breeding era at the Bar U. The barn may also serve as the venue to present the story of conserving the historic buildings of the Bar U.
- The Percheron box stalls building will be conserved to ensure its structural integrity. The building, however, will not be accessible to the public in the foreseeable future.
- The root cellar entry will be conserved.
- The chop house tower will be structurally reinforced.
- The portable self-feeder, livestock shed, self-feeder / bunkhouse, animal shelter and wind generator building will be stabilized.
- A monitoring program will be developed and carried out for the buildings.
- A cyclical maintenance plan will be developed and implemented for the conserved buildings.

4.2.4 Corrals, Pens, Fences, Squeezes and Chutes

The Bar U Ranch NHSC is spatially defined and organized by the fences along its boundaries and those dividing its pastures. With the arrival of cattle at the Bar U in 1882, corrals were built near the ranch headquarters for feeding, sorting, branding and doctoring. Around 1908 George Lane introduced the wooden squeeze to assist in the handling of livestock. Wintering pens, dating from about 1940, were built as a place to feed greater numbers of young cattle during the winter. The pens, corrals, the special features associated with them (e.g., chutes and squeezes) and most fences are Level 1 cultural resources and represent essential elements of the Bar U as a once working ranch. After more than a hundred years of evolving ranching practices, their layout has become complex. The study, *Corrals, Fences and Special Features* (Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1996) provides a systematic inventory and evaluation of these cultural resources, a necessary first step for their ongoing protection and presentation.

The protection strategy for these cultural resources will follow the guidelines and recommendations for fencing and corrals found in Sections 3.6 and 4.5 of the Site's *Area Development Plan*. The protection and management of the corrals will be guided by the understanding that they will be used for handling livestock, and will be accessed by the public for equestrian and livestock events at this location. Where possible, existing fences and gates will be kept or replicated, but these will be reinforced, where necessary, with panel fences and gates for public and animal safety.

Key Actions:

- The west side corrals will be re-established for livestock demonstrations. This will be done in a manner that respects their heritage defining characteristics, yet makes them functional and safe for holding livestock and operating equestrian and livestock events.
- The wooden squeeze will receive particular attention for protection and presentation, including recording how it worked and the brand markings on it.

4.2.5 Historic Objects and Archaeological Objects

When Parks Canada acquired the Bar U, it acquired very few historic objects related to the history of the ranch or ranching in general. Since then, both Parks Canada and the Friends of the Historic Bar U Ranch Association have acquired and used objects to furnish some buildings.

Parks Canada and the Friends have developed a practical approach to effective, responsible collections management and care. It will see the historic objects used in heritage presentation at the Bar U managed as one collection. The approach will:

- support the Site's heritage protection and presentation objectives;
- benefit Parks Canada, the Friends, and donors and lenders of historic objects;
- clearly identify responsibilities and accountabilities for:
  - acquiring objects by donation, loan or purchase,
  - inventorying and cataloguing,
  - maintaining and monitoring objects and displays on-site, and
  - conserving and restoring objects;
- recognize Parks Canada policies on collections management and conservation;
- recognize the mandate and objectives of the Friends; and
- recognize the Friends and Parks Canada as two separate organizations, yet partners and supporters of one another.

A Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada and the Friends outlines our relationship, roles and responsibilities in collections management and care.

Bar U archaeological objects have been recovered from various investigations at the Bar U Ranch headquarters complex. Of the many individual objects in this collection, some have historic value. Those that are associated with the ranch operations during the period 1882-1950 are Level 1 cultural resources. Those associated with ranching after 1950 or pre-dating the Bar U ranch are Level 2. The Western Canada Service Centre will be the custodian of this collection.

4.3 Visitor Services and Facilities

This section describes the strategy for providing visitor services and facilities that make for a safe, sustainable, and enjoyable learning atmosphere at the Bar U.

Visitor Services and Facilities Goal

- Visitors enjoy and appreciate the Bar U Ranch NHSC in a manner and level of use that is safe for them and for the cultural and natural resources of the Site.

Visitor Services and Facilities Objectives

- The Site's services, facilities and products will meet or exceed visitor expectations.
- Visitor use and expectations are managed.

In keeping with Parks Canada guiding principles, services and facilities will directly complement appropriate visitor opportunities for the Bar U. They must be considered necessary, take account of the level of visitation and not compromise the Site's commemorative integrity.

4.3.1 Basic Services

Basic services support the heritage program and ensure basic visitor comfort and safety. Existing visitor programs, services and facilities meet current visitation levels.

Visitor opportunities will come from the heritage presentation program, described in section 4.1. Visitor opportunities can include:

- Taking in demonstrations, talks and activities led by staff and volunteers;
- Wagon rides;
- Passive or active participation in special events;
- Taking a break from it all at the restaurant, cookhouse or the Pekisko Creek rest stop;
- Exploring the grassland alone or with a group, on foot or on horseback;
- Participating in children's programs; and
- photography and visiting the gift shop.

The strategy for visitor services and facilities – to provide for a range of visitor experiences (from social to educational, passive to active) and memories – will involve offering choices in terms of what, where and when visitors can see, hear and do things. It is expected that most visitors will be able to spend from two to three hours at the Bar U (not including time in the restaurant) and that repeat visitation can increase from recent estimates of fifteen percent among the local community and excursionists from Calgary and area. This strategy, along with some added services and facilities (notably the cookhouse rest stop, the Pekisko Creek rest stop and range trail) are outlined in section 4.1. Other key actions follow.

Key Actions:

- Parking specific for buses and recreational vehicles will be demarcated in the parking lot.
- Visitor satisfaction surveys will be done periodically.
- A public safety plan for the Bar U will be updated and implemented.

4.3.2 Special Events

A special event is any special gathering involving a large group or crowd of people and an associated array of activities. It can take place over several hours to several days. An event's audience may be watching, participating, or both. An outside group provides the event in cooperation or partnership with Parks Canada.

Figure 8. Special event at the corrals. (Parks Canada)

Special events will continue to be an important part of the Bar U Ranch (Figure 8). Parks Canada will evaluate proposals for special events to ensure they are compatible with the Site's purpose and do not threaten or impair its commemorative integrity, nor its environment.

4.4 Marketing the Bar U

Parks Canada recognizes the strong, unrealized potential of the Bar U Ranch NHSC for heritage tourism and the consequent economic benefits of tourism. Heritage tourism is a growth market regionally and nationally. This form of tourism occurs when a heritage activity is a significant factor for travelling. Heritage tourists seek quality-learning opportunities in authentic settings.

Marketing Goal

- The Bar U Ranch NHSC is a significant attraction in the larger heritage and nature tourism context of southern Alberta.

Marketing Objectives

- Heritage tourism will be a central priority in the Bar U's marketing and operating plans.
- Parks Canada will work with other agencies in cooperative packaging, marketing and programming; build awareness in the travel industry of the importance of the Bar U and its ranching heritage.
- Visitation will increase.

The Bar U Ranch and how it operates needs to be looked at from the market's perspective. This includes a whole spectrum, for example: making the entrance easier to find and more inviting; programs that are more experiential; scheduling staff and hours of operation that work better with bus groups; and the need for hospitality training for staff and volunteers.

The Bar U Ranch is well positioned to capitalize on marketing alliances with other major players in the tourism industry, including: the Cowboy Trail, Trail of the Great Bear, the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, Tourism Calgary and Heritage Park.

The approach to marketing is to make the Bar U relevant to local, regional, national and international audiences. The two essential steps to this are building a better program, which the living ranch is all about and which this management plan outlines, and getting the message out about this program and its unique offering. Already, in 2003, visitation has increased and reached peak levels not seen since 1998.

Key Actions:

- The "curb appeal" of the Bar U will be improved with interpretive media at the highway 22 turn-off to the Site.
- A marketing plan to achieve increased visitation will be developed and implemented.

4.5 *Environmental Stewardship*

This section outlines our approach to managing the Bar U Ranch NHSC for its natural heritage values in harmony with its commemorative integrity objectives. We envision the natural character of the Bar U Ranch NHSC as enhanced by a healthy, predominantly native, riparian zone and rangeland. Areas of native grassland and riparian forest will be valued and enjoyed by visitors.

Environmental Stewardship Goal

- Natural ecosystem features are valued in a manner that reflects the role of Parks Canada as an environmental steward.
- The Bar U Ranch NHSC demonstrates sound environmental practices.

Environmental Stewardship Objectives

- Rangeland use will be designed and practiced such that it ensures the presence and diversity of the full suite of native grasses.
- The conditions for a healthy riparian corridor along Pekisko Creek will be maintained.
- Non-native plant species will be controlled or eliminated.
- Environmental management performance of the Site in its activities, services and products will be improved.

- Staff, partners and visitors will be told of the importance and the challenges of environmental stewardship at the Bar U.

Strategies in support of environmental stewardship include developing and implementing a vegetation management plan, carrying out the Waterton Field Unit Environmental Management Strategy at the Bar U and continued partnering with the Cows and Fish Program. Parks Canada will continue to collaborate with the Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Program ("Cows and Fish") on research, monitoring and educational activities toward the goal of conserving native grasslands and riparian ecosystems. A Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada and Cows and Fish outlines their relationship, and respective roles and responsibilities.

Key Actions:

- ➢ A vegetation management plan will be developed, approved and implemented for the Bar U.

4.6 *Public Involvement and Partnerships*

We will work with the public and our partners to enhance the promotion, presentation and protection of the Bar U Ranch NHSC (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Former Bar U ranch hands. (Parks Canada)

Public Involvement and Partnerships Goal

- The commemorative integrity of the Bar U Ranch NHSC is enhanced through public involvement and partnerships.

Public Involvement and Partnerships Objectives

- Key Site policy, land-use and planning decisions affecting partners and stakeholders will be arrived at in a participatory manner.
- Partnerships will add to the experience of visitors.
- Partnerships and public involvement will help support the protection of the Bar U Ranch NHSC.

It is imperative that Parks Canada reaches the local community through outreach on the national significance of the Bar U and its mandate as a protected heritage area toward building a supportive constituency. This includes members of the public living in close vicinity of the Bar U, as well as businesses, non-governmental heritage and environmental organizations,

and the local governments for the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31 and the Village of Longview.

The Friends will continue to be a most important partner of the Bar U. Their role will include being an advocate on behalf of this national historic site, a liaison between the Site and the local community, a supporter of Parks Canada in the heritage presentation of the Bar U and a participant in the Site's collections management and care. A Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada and the Friends outlines our relationship, roles and responsibilities in protecting, presenting and promoting the Bar U.

Parks Canada will continue to share information and seek to participate in cooperative planning initiatives with neighbouring landowners and land management agencies.

4.7 *Administration and Operations*

The Bar U Ranch NHSC will continue to be operated by Parks Canada under the authority of the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*. Parks Canada will operate the Bar U within current estimates of human and financial resources. Efficiencies will be sought in how staff provide visitor services. Working with partners will continue to be a significant part of how Parks Canada operates the Bar U Ranch.

Key to the living ranch approach at the Bar U will be acquiring, training and maintaining staff and volunteers who can work with and around livestock and traditional ranching and farming equipment. Heritage presenters will be a rare, but special breed of ranch hands and communicators.

4.8 *Environmental Assessment Decision Statement*

A strategic level environmental assessment was conducted for the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site Management Plan pursuant to the 1999 "Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals" (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency 1999). The environmental assessment was focused on the strategic direction and management plans actions that would not be subject to individual project environmental assessment and on cumulative effects.

Many positive impacts are expected as a result of implementing the management plan. These include enhanced protection of heritage resources, improvements in heritage presentation, improved quality of visitor experience and the establishment of environmental management systems and plans.

Three key strategic directions have the potential to result in adverse environmental effects related to cumulative impacts or would not be subject to individual project-level environmental assessments. These include the

cumulative impacts of many individual construction and restoration projects, the restoration of livestock to the Site, and the intended expansion of visitor use. Mitigation related to the potential impacts of these directions is contained within the environmental assessment conducted for the management plan.

Most impacts of construction and restoration projects will be addressed through individual project environmental assessments. Cumulative environmental effects on vegetation and wildlife will be managed through project timing and planning that will avoid sensitive seasons and locations. Impacts associated with the return of livestock to the Site will be managed through the development of a comprehensive vegetation management plan that will include consideration of grazing impacts, invasive species and wildlife habitat concerns. The impacts of increased visitor use are expected to be within the capacity of existing facilities and will be concentrated in existing and newly developed facilities and hardened sites. Monitoring systems put in place as a result of the management plan will provide timely input on the state of heritage and natural resource values.

As a result of the strategic level environmental assessment, it is concluded that implementation of the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site Management Plan is not likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects.

The Bar U Ranch, 1931

"At the top of the hillside Raymond told me I would soon see the Bar U. Well, I was not prepared to see the lovely sloping hills and soft moulded valleys as far as the eye could see. The distant horizon just a little more blue than elsewhere, a little higher and more lovely. The Rocky Mountains, the grass, and more grass, under the mid-day sun, a lake, sometimes a river, sometimes a cluster of trees near the water. To the south there were huge hay stacks looking like large loaves of bread. All of this before we got to the Bar U buildings! This is what you would call a real Ranch. . . . The Bar U was about three and one-half townships. There were roughly 8,000 head of cattle, made up of cows, calves, heifers and steers, and over 150 bulls, all Herefords. . . . We had driven down a hill and were entering the main ranch buildings. It was like a little town or village."

From Ann's Story. A Great Ranching Empire and the People Who Made it Work by Ann Clifford (Forever in Memory Publications, 1995). Ann Clifford's husband, Raymond, managed the cattle operations at Bar U Ranch. This is her account of their arrival at the ranch.

5. Management Plan Implementation and Evaluation

The strategies and actions proposed in this management plan will be implemented through the Site's business plan. The management plan is a strategic guide with a life span of ten to fifteen years (reviewed every five years). The business plan identifies which actions of the management plan will be realized during the next five years, and their timing and cost. Any changes to the five-year forecast are captured by the annual review and update of the business plan.

The key actions are identified and presented according to Parks Canada business plan service lines in the chart that follows. However, these may be reconsidered in response to new circumstances or information, or changing national priorities and decisions. No priority has been assigned to activities beyond identifying in which business planning period they should occur. Further prioritizing will occur during Field Unit Business planning.

Execution of this management plan is the responsibility of the Waterton Field Unit Superintendent. Implementation of the strategies and actions depends on the reallocation of resources within the Field Unit. As well, cooperative initiatives with partners will be sought to identify, evaluate and pursue appropriate projects.

Progress on the management plan implementation will be communicated through annual reporting and the Parks Canada State of the Protected Heritage Areas report, which is updated every couple of years. The management plan will also be subject to periodic review, and can be amended to reflect changing circumstances. The public will be consulted about major changes.

Business Plan Service Lines	Action	Business Plan Periods	
		1st 5 -year period	2nd 5-year period
Heritage Resource Protection	• A map and database for the headquarters that records changes to the buildings, landscape and archaeological remains over time.	X	
	• The Percheron box stalls building will be conserved to ensure its structural integrity.		X
	• The portable self-feeder, privy, livestock shed, bunk house, animal shelter, and wind generator building will be stabilized.	X	
	• The cook house will be conserved.	X	
	• The root cellar entry will be conserved.	X	
	• The west side corrals will be re-established for livestock demonstrations.	X	
	• The wooden squeeze will receive particular attention for protection and presentation.	X	
	• A monitoring program will be developed and carried out for the buildings.	X	>
	• A cyclical maintenance plan will be developed and implemented for the conserved buildings.	X	>
	• The stud horse barn will be partially rehabilitated.	X	
	• Overhead contemporary utilities will be replaced with buried and hidden service lines.		X
	• Input to future municipal planning that relates to the Bar U will be provided where possible.	X	>
	• A disaster preparedness plan for the ranch headquarters will be completed.	X	
	• Vegetation management plan will be developed, approved and implemented.	X	>

Heritage Presentation	• Heritage programming and products will be developed toward delivering and achieving a living ranch program.	X	>
	• A display plan will be developed, approved and implemented for the pens and corrals.		X
	• A range trail will be designed and developed based on guidelines in the 1997 *Area Development Plan*.		X
	• A display plan will be developed and possibly implemented for the chop house.		X
	• A viewpoint to the west of the Visitor Centre will be established.	X	
	• A signage program will be developed and implemented for the ranch headquarters.	X	
	• Furnishing plans will be developed, approved and implemented for the ranch office / post office, harness shop, cook house, the three storage buildings, and the blacksmith's shop.	X	X
	• A display will be developed, approved and implemented for the stud horse barn.	X	
	• Certain displays within the Visitor Centre will be relocated and re-labelled.	X	
	• A display and cross-promotion material on the family of national historic sites will be included in the Visitor Centre.	X	
	• A more positive sense of arrival and welcome at the Site's front gate and Visitor Centre will be created through signage and other visual media.	X	
	• The *old-timers* stories will be recorded.	X	
	• A corral will be located next to the stud horse barn.	X	
	• Cosmetic work on the log house will be done.	X	

Visitor Services	• The Pekisko Creek rest stop will be established.	X	
	• The front gate and VRC arrival and welcome will be improved.	X	
	• Visitor satisfaction surveys will be periodically done.	X	X
	• The public safety plan will be updated.	X	
	• A marketing plan will be completed.	X	
Manage-ment of Parks Canada	• Staff and volunteer training and development will be provided.	X	>
	• A constituency of public support will be developed.	X	>
	• Implementation of the plan will be communicated, monitored and reported on.	X	>

X denotes projects/activities that take place within one period
> denotes continuation of the same project/activity over more than one period